

IN THE CLAIMS AMEND

1. (Currently Amended) A separator assembly for separating a container from a web of at least two containers, comprising:

- a frame member having a base and a post extending upwardly from the base;

- at least one clamp;

- a first and second linkage, the first and second linkages positioned in a spaced apart orientation relative to each other, each of the first and second linkages pivotally coupled at a first end to the post of the frame member and at a second end to the at least one clamp;

~~associated with the frame member~~, the at least one clamp including a lower surface defined by at least two legs and a slot positioned therebetween, wherein the two legs, and the slot are fixed to each other so as to be incapable of relative movement, to, in turn, facilitate the clamping of a portion of a web of at least two containers relative to the base;

- at least one clamp actuator associated pivotally coupled to with each of the at least one clamp and the frame, the at least one clamp actuator capable of selectively moving the at least two legs and the slot of the lower surface of the at least one clamp relative to the frame, to, in turn, releasably clamp a portion of a web of at least two containers between the base and the at least two legs;

~~- wherein the at least one clamp is pivotally mounted to each of the frame member and the at least one clamp actuator to, in turn, pivot relative to each of the frame member and the at least one actuator from a released orientation to an engaged orientation;~~

- a blade assembly associated with the base; and

- a blade actuator associated with the blade assembly, the blade actuator moves the blade assembly transversely across the slot of the lower surface of the at least one clamp.

2. (Original) The separator assembly of claim 1 wherein the blade assembly further comprises a blade having at least one concave blade surface.

3. (Original) The separator assembly of claim 2 wherein the blade assembly further comprises a blade having at least two concave blade surfaces opposing each other, such that transverse movement in either a first direction or an opposing second direction results in the cutting of a web clamped by the at least one clamp.

4. (Original) The separator assembly of claim 2 wherein the at least one concave blade surface comprises a semi-circular configuration.

5. (Withdrawn) The separator assembly of claim 1 wherein the blade actuator further comprises:

- an actuator motor;
- at least one guide pulley spaced apart from the actuator motor; and
- a belt member configured to extend about each of the actuator motor and the at least one guide pulley, wherein the blade assembly is coupled to the belt member.

6. (Withdrawn) The separator assembly of claim 1 wherein the base further comprises means for guiding the blade along the slot.

7. (Withdrawn) The separator assembly of claim 6 wherein the blade guiding means further comprises a guide rail disposed proximate the slot and a guide channel fixed with the blade assembly, the guide rail and the guide channel further comprising mating configurations, whereupon engagement of same, the guide channel is slidably movable along the guide rail.

8. (Currently Amended) A separator assembly for separating a container from a web of at least two containers, comprising:

- a frame member having a base and a post extending from the base;
- ~~- a handle member having a second end capable of pivotal and translative movement relative to the frame;~~
- ~~- at least one clamp being associated with a first end of the handle member having a link member coupled thereto,~~
- ~~- a first linkage and a second linkage rotatably coupled to each of the link member and the post extending from the base; and~~
- ~~- at least one clamp actuator pivotally associated at a first end with the frame member and pivotally associated at a second end with the link handle member between the first and second ends thereof, the at least one clamp actuator capable of selectively rotating the first and second linkages about each of the link member and the post, thereby moving the at least one clamp relative to the base, to, in turn, releasably clamp a portion of a web of at least two containers therebetween;~~
- a blade assembly associated with the base; and

- a blade actuator associated with the blade assembly, the blade actuator capable of selectively moving the blade assembly transversely across the slot of the lower surface of the at least one clamp.

9. (Original) The separator assembly of claim 8 wherein the blade assembly further comprises a blade having at least one concave blade surface.

10. (Original) The separator assembly of claim 9 wherein the blade assembly further comprises a blade having at least two concave blade surfaces opposing each other, such that transverse movement in either a first direction or an opposing second direction results in the cutting of a web clamped by the at least one clamp.

11. (Original) The separator assembly of claim 9 wherein the at least one concave blade surface comprises a semi-circular configuration.

12. (Withdrawn) The separator assembly of claim 8 wherein the blade actuator further comprises:

- an actuator motor;

- at least one guide pulley spaced apart from the actuator motor; and

- a belt member configured to extend about each of the actuator motor and the at least one guide pulley, wherein the blade assembly is coupled to the belt member.

13. (Withdrawn) The separator assembly of claim 8 wherein the base further comprises a blade guide configured to direct the blade across the slot.